

FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

12-12

Orleans

EAS.1300

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Town/City: EASTHAM

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): North Eastham/ Nauset

Address: 320 Nauset Road Rear

Historic Name: Maurice and Margaret Richardson House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

Date of Construction: ca. 1910-1912

Source: 1910 Barnstable County Atlas, vital records

Style/Form: Colonial Revival/ Full Cape

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Unknown

Wall/Trim: Wood shingles/ Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Outbuilding north of house (pre-1938, unknown use)

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

None on record

Condition: Good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 5.39 acres

Setting: This large parcel is located on the southeast side of the small salt-water pond that connects to Salt Pond Bay. The property is surrounded by Cape Cod National Seashore land. The area around the house is landscaped with expanses of lawn and foundation plantings, and is otherwise left in a natural state with fields, and mature deciduous and coniferous trees.

Photograph



2017 Assessor Photo

Locus Map



Recorded by: Eric Dray, Preservation Consultant, for

Organization: Eastham Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): April 2025

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

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320 NAUSET ROAD REAR

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

(This house is not visible from Nauset Road; this Description is based on Assessor photos and may not include all features.)

This summer house is a charming example of a Colonial Revival-style Full Cape, with an ell that itself is a variation on the Cape form. The Colonial Revival style began in the late-19th century with a new interest in the country's own architecture of the Colonial-era and early Republic as a source of inspiration. It was a style that remained popular well into the 20th century. The 1 ½-story, side-gable main block of this house has the form of a Full Cape with a center entrance flanked on either side by two evenly-spaced windows. One of the clues that this is a Colonial Revival-style house is the evenly spaced brick chimneys – an older Cape would have a central chimney aligned with the front door. A comparison of the 1938 and 1952 United States Geological Survey (USGS) aerial photographs of Cape Cod show that the ell was added or expanded into its current form sometime between those dates (Photos 3 and 4).

The main block of the house has an unusual feature in that the five-bay configuration of the Full Cape form is employed on both the front (north) and rear (south) elevations, except the four mullioned windows on the left side of the north elevation which is a later alteration. In addition to the front and rear elevations, symmetry is also found with the four single-windows gable dormers aligned with the four windows on both elevations.

Fenestration includes wood, single-glazed, 12/12 double-hung sash set in molded frames that abut the roof entablature on the first story, and 6/9 double-hung sash in the dormers. The north and south elevations of the main block, and the north elevation of the side ell, all have centered entrances. The entrance surrounds on the north elevations are more elaborate with broad pilasters, signaling that this is the "front" of the house. The house is clad in weathered wood shingles with plain cornerboards. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

Incorporated as Nauset Plantation in 1646, and changed to Eastham in 1651, Eastham territory originally extended south to Pleasant Bay and north beyond Wellfleet Harbor. The early development pattern for what we now know as Eastham was impacted by its absence of deep-water harbor facilities. Relatively fertile soil led to dispersed agricultural settlement, but residential and commercial development was concentrated to the north at Wellfleet Harbor and to the south at Town Cove and Pleasant Bay. When the separate towns of Wellfleet and Orleans were created in the late-18th century, Eastham became and remained one of the least populated towns on the Cape throughout the 19th century.

In the 19th century, Eastham was the agricultural center of the Outer Cape. Crops evolved over time; corn and dairy were surpassed in the early-20th century by asparagus and turnips - two crops well suited for the sandy soil. In 1900, 58% of Eastham's workers were employed as farmers, but by 1930 that number had dwindled to 21%. Summer resort development, including cottage colonies and subdivisions of former farmland that would transform Eastham, had begun in earnest in the 1920s as middle-class access to car ownership increased and Cape roads were improved.

This house was built on a five-acre parcel of land that John Doane sold in 1892 to Maurice H. Richardson of Boston.¹ That same year, Maurice Richardson bought, with Frank Weston Benson, the ca. 1806 Simeon and Zilpha Doane House to the east at 310

¹ Barnstable County Registry of Deeds, Book 201/ Page 354.

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Nauset Road Rear (EAS.94). Maurice Richardson's family was one of two families bearing the same surname that owned properties and spent parts of their years in Eastham: the other was Boston architect Frederick Leopold William Richardson, the son of famed architect Henry Hobson Richardson who also lived in the Nauset section nearer to the Cove.

Maurice Howe Richardson (1852-1912) married Margaret White Peirson in 1876. He was a prominent surgeon in Boston and an avid fisherman and waterfowl sportsman. Born in Athol in 1852, Maurice Howe Richardson graduated from Harvard Medical School in 1877 and began his career as an anatomy instructor there. He was the Moseley Professor of Surgery at Harvard until 1886, when he became a visiting surgeon at Massachusetts General Hospital. Richardson was appointed surgeon-in-chief in 1910, a position he held until his death in 1912. His *Boston Globe* obituary stated that Richardson "was recognized as one of the great surgeons of the world," and two of his sons, Edward Peirson Richardson (1881-1944) and Wyman Richardson (1896-1953), also became distinguished surgeons.²

This house has an Assessor date of 1920, and a dwelling house, garage and boat house are shown in the 1920 Eastham real estate tax records owned by Margaret Richardson. However, the tax records for 1903-1919 are not available, so it is possible this house was built earlier, and possibly before Maurice's death in 1912. The house is not shown on the 1910 Barnstable County Atlas, so it could have been built sometime between 1910 and 1912.

In 1931, Margaret Richardson sold this property, referred to as River Field, to her son, Edward Pierson Richardson of Brookline for a nominal sum.³ Edward's brother, Wyman, acquired all the interest in the house next door at 310 Nauset Road Rear. The third son, Maurice Howe Richardson, Jr. (1886-1961), bought a large piece of land boarding in Long Pond in 1930 and built a cottage there (395 Locust Road Rear, EAS.1287).

Dr. Edward Pierson Richardson, Sr. (1881-1944) married Clara Lee Shattuck (1883-1921) in 1917. They had three children, Edward Pierson Richardson, Jr., Elliot Lee Richardson, and George Shattuck Richardson. All three were conveyed this property pursuant to their father's will.⁴ Both Edward Richardson, Jr. (1918-1998) and George Richardson (1921-2011) were doctors with ties to Harvard Medical School and Massachusetts General Hospital. Elliot Richardson (1920-1999) was a lawyer and prominent Republican, serving in the cabinets of President Nixon and Ford between 1970 and 1977. Most notably, after serving as Secretary of Defense for three months, Nixon appointed him Attorney General in 1973, leading to his involvement in the Watergate investigation and his eventual resignation out of protest over Nixon's order that he fire special prosecutor Archibald Cox.

In 1995, George Richardson living in Nahant, Elliot living in McLean, VA, and Edward, living in Brookline, sold this property to their wives – Rebekah (Ketchum), Anne P. (Taylor), and Margaret (Eustis).⁵ The property is now held in a family trust.

It is worth noting that this house was originally surrounded by an 18-hole links golf course – Cedar Banks Links. It was laid out on former asparagus and turnips fields and surrounding marshland by Richardson's neighbor and, very likely, good friend - Quincy Adams Shaw in 1925-1928. Shaw had built a summer house himself nearby (630 Nauset Road Rear, EAS.1301) that was also surrounded by the golf course, as can be seen in a marvelous aerial photo (Photo 5). Both families had extensive land holdings at the time, and the golf course was set close by Richardson's house, so they likely also contributed some of their land to the cause (see Map of the golf course, Figure 2). Cedar Banks Links was not a public course – Shaw built it for himself and his friends. The course was in operation until the 1940s. Much of the land was sold by Richardson, Shaw and others to the Federal government for the Cape Cod National Seashore. The Salt Pond Visitor Center sits atop the 9th hole, and Eastham Town Hall was the site of the 12th hole.

² "Found Dead in Bed. Dr. Maurice Howe Richardson, Boston's Most Eminent Surgeon," *Boston Globe*, 31 July 1912, 1, and "Dr. E. P. Richardson," *Boston Globe*, 27 January 1944, 9 (adapted from the Form B for 310 Nauset Rad Rear, EAS.94).

³ Book 486/ Page 545.

⁴ Book 867/ Page 280, Book 922/ Page 222, Book 963/ Page 54.

⁵ Book 9984/ Page 150.

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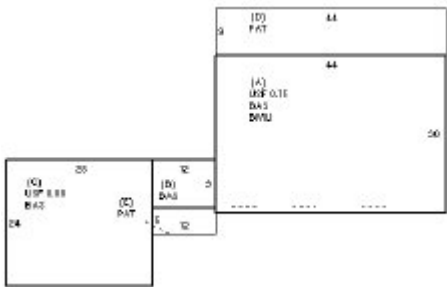


Figure 1. Assessor Sketch.

Photo 2. View of south (rear) elevations (2017 Assessor photo).



Photo 3. Detail of 1938 USGS aerial survey.

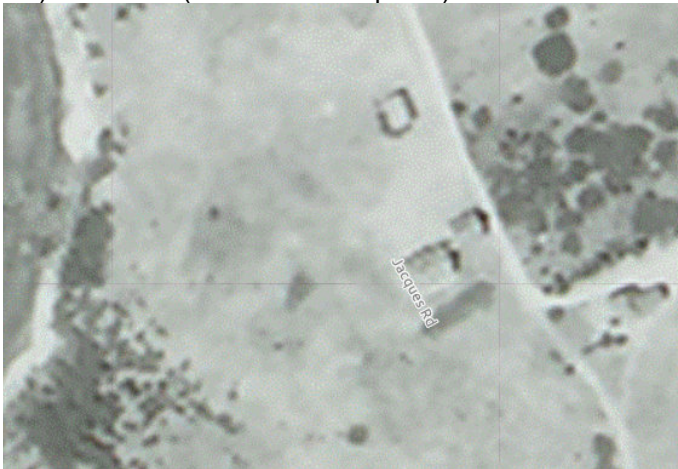


Photo 4. Detail of 1952 USGS aerial survey.

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Photo 5. Aerial view of Cedar Bank Links golf course, looking north. Arrow to 320 Nauset Road Rear added (undated view, Eastham Historical Society).

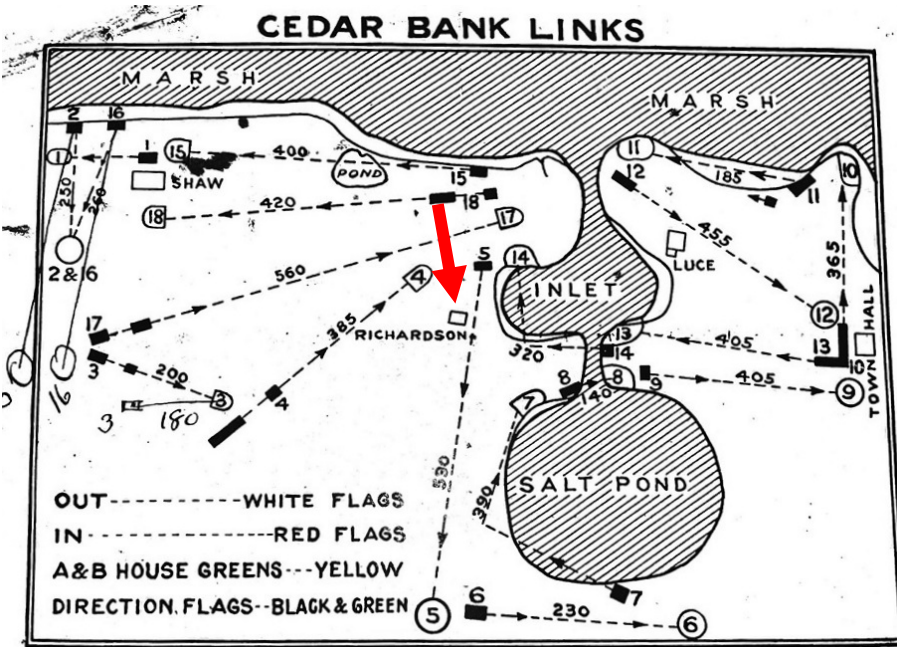


Figure 2. Map of Cedar Banks Links, arrow to 320 Nauset Road Rear added (Eastham Historical Society).